Listing of the Claims:

1-39. (Canceled)

40. (Currently amended) A method for conferencing, comprising:

determining whether noise is present on at least one port of a conferencing system;

determining a dynamic threshold value for the at least one port, if and only if it was determined that noise was present;

receiving an audio signal over the at least one port;

comparing a characteristic of the received audio signal to the determined dynamic threshold value; and

including the received audio signal in a conference sum audio signal provided~~broadcast~~ to at least some participants of the conference depending on the result of the comparison.

41. (Previously presented) The method of claim 40, wherein the received audio signal is included in the conference sum if the characteristic exceeds the dynamic threshold value.

42. (Previously presented) The method of claim 41, wherein the characteristic comprises audio signal energy.

43. (Previously presented) The method of claim 41, wherein the characteristic comprises audio signal magnitude.

44. (Previously presented) The method of claim 40, wherein determining whether noise is present on the at least one port comprises a comparison to a noise threshold.

45. (Previously presented) The method of claim 44, wherein the comparison to a noise threshold occurs for a predetermined amount of time.

46. (Currently amended) A method for conferencing, comprising:

receiving an audio signal over the at least one port of a conferencing system;

determining whether a DTMF tone is present in the received audio signal;

if a DTMF tone is present in the audio signal, omitting the received audio signal from a conference sum audio signal provided~~broadcast~~ to at least some participants of the conference.

47. (Previously presented) The method of claim 46, wherein omitting the received audio comprises assessment of a DTMF detect signal.

48. (Withdrawn – Currently amended) A method for conferencing, comprising:

determining whether valid speech is present in an audio signal received over at least one port of a conferencing system;

determining whether a DTMF tone is present in the received audio signal;

if valid speech is present and if no DTMF tone is present, including the received audio signal in a conference sum audio signal provided~~broadcast~~ to at least some participants of the conference;

if valid speech is not present or if a DTMF tone is present, omitting the received audio signal from a conference sum audio signal broadcast to at least some participants of the conference.

49. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 48, wherein determining whether valid speech is present comprises:

determining whether noise is present in the on the at least one port;

determining a dynamic threshold value for the at least one port if and only if it was determined that noise was present; and

comparing a characteristic of the received audio signal to the determined dynamic threshold value.

50. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 49, wherein the characteristic comprises audio signal energy.

51. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 49, wherein the characteristic comprises audio signal magnitude.

52. (Currently amended) A programmable processor communicatively coupled to ~~computer program accessible by~~ a conferencing system, the programmable processor programmed with a program to [[for]] manage[[ing]] a conference, the program comprising instructions for~~capable of~~:

determining whether noise is present on at least one port of a conferencing system;

determining a dynamic threshold value for the at least one port, if and only if it was determined that noise was present;

receiving an audio signal over the at least one port;

comparing a characteristic of the received audio signal to the determined dynamic threshold value; and

including the received audio signal in a conference sum audio signal provided~~broadcast~~ to at least some participants of the conference depending on the result of the comparison.

53. (Currently amended) A programmable processor communicatively coupled to ~~computer program accessible by~~ a conferencing system, the programmable processor programmed with a program to [[for]] manage[[ing]] a conference, the program comprising instructions for~~capable of~~:

receiving an audio signal over the at least one port of a conferencing system;

determining whether a DTMF tone is present in the received audio signal;

if a DTMF tone is present in the audio signal, omitting the received audio signal from a conference sum audio signal provided~~broadcast~~ to at least some participants of the conference.

54. (Withdrawn – Currently amended) A programmable processor communicatively coupled to ~~computer program accessible by~~ a conferencing system, the programmable processor programmed with a program to [[for]] manage[[ing]] a conference, the program comprising instructions for~~capable of~~:

determining whether valid speech is present in an audio signal received over at least one port of a conferencing system;

determining whether a DTMF tone is present in the received audio signal;

if valid speech is present and if no DTMF tone is present, including the received audio signal in a conference sum audio signal broadcast to at least some participants of the conference;

if valid speech is not present or if a DTMF tone is present, omitting the received audio signal from a conference sum audio signal provided~~broadcast~~ to at least some participants of the conference.